



BANWELL NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2019

Special points of INTEREST

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Formal Dinner
Rewards for Forces

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Chairman's Foreword

Hi Everyone – this is our second newsletter. The first one went down well receiving some very positive feedback from members and I hope you will feel the same about this one. Thank you for that feedback and I would like to thank Gill for putting it together – realising the importance of keeping us together as a community.

It is that time of year when we find ourselves inundated with requests for funds and donations. I know I do and it has given me 'food for thought'. Whilst our funds are in a 'steady state', rather than ask existing members for additional donations, the Committee and I have agreed that we should look at joining forces with other Charities in the village which would mean splitting costs of putting

on events and the organisations and the RBL sharing any profits. We are hopeful that this will boost our funds overall. This relies on the Community, such as RBL members, to attend such events and tell us what they would like to see happening.

Please make a diary note that on Saturday 7 December in the Village Hall we will be holding a joint event where there will be a quiz and a bit of a party. Details are still being discussed so please keep your eyes open for posters around the village advertising it. If you would like to help in selling tickets to this event please contact members of the committee.

We arranged a visit to Warwick Castle on the 23 October but sadly, due to lack of uptake, we had had to cancel it. This decision was not taken lightly as we had been hopeful that the coach would be filled. Last year the trip to Bletchley Park trip had a waiting list. We think that coach trips are a useful way of bringing communities together and we are happy to continue to organise them but we do need your support – are there any places that you would like to visit?

Another diary date : on 2 November at 1400 the Parish Council are planting trees of different species in and around the village in memory of the men who did not return from the 1914/18 War. We will be planting the first tree in a short ceremony lead by the Parish Council Chairman and Ian Tabrett a descendant of one of those named on the War Memorial. The RBL will be the second organisation to plant a tree which will then be followed by other organisations. I plan to have the RBL standards on parade for the planting of the first two trees and for any other group that might like to include them. We will also have a couple of amateur photographers taking photos of this historical event. Keep your fingers crossed for good weather and I do hope you will be able to attend this memorable event.

As I write this Remembrance Day is all in hand. Again we hope for good weather,

Lastly, but certainly not least, I would like to welcome Martin and Joyce Hemmings as the Branch's new Poppy Appeal Organisers. They introduce themselves later in this newsletter but I am grateful to them for stepping in this year.

Tom Couch

Chairman

From the editor

This is the second of our newsletters and, as the Chairman has said, the first was well received. I have quite a standard to live up to. This time I had too much material so have had to select and cut. Thank you to all who contributed.

I had hoped to have an update on the Veterans Cards that were mentioned in the last letter but as of now there has been none. Hopefully we will hear more towards the end of the year.

We had an excellent talk from the Freewheelers at our branch meeting in the summer. In critical situations, blood or other medical items need to be delivered urgently to save a patient's life. These blood bikes, with their distinctive livery, emergency lights and highly trained riders can cut through traffic quickly and safely and all are volunteers.



All of us might need their services at some time in our lives and everyone was most impressed by their dedication. Our members on the night were very generous and donated money including the raffle money to this good cause. Which brings me to branch meetings.

What do you want to get from branch meetings? There are plans to discuss this at the AGM and we really would like to know what you our members would like. Our funds are in a reasonably healthy state, although we cannot afford to run at a loss, but we can use them for your benefit especially if we, the Committee, know what you would like to do. Please note the diary dates at the end of this newsletter. In the next newsletter I plan to show you photographs of the D day memorial in Banwell and the VE day memorial with information to go with them.

Gill Fawcitt

Being a member of the R.B.L. in Bristol I transferred to the Banwell Branch when it was reformed. As an ex member of the RAF I had not considered joining the RAFA club. However a local friend took me to the RAFA coffee morning and I have enjoyed, as often as possible, the weekly coffee mornings at their club in Weston. Suffice to say the President asked me to attend the Forces Day Parade which I considered to be more than I could manage until I was informed I would be pushed in a wheelchair as would several other disabled members by some of the RAF cadets.



Come the day my wife Maureen and I were collected and taken to Weston RAFA Hotel on the seafront. There we were met by the Cadet who was to be my helper for the day and supplied with a wheelchair. We then proceeded to the pier which was the starting place for the parade. We were joined by the Band of the Royal Marines Plymouth.

It was a beautiful day and quite a crowd had gathered to watch the parade and visit the many stalls on the beach lawns. At 12 noon the Band of the Royal Marines set the parade moving to the parade ground, a cordoned off area of the Beach lawns, and we were entertained with precision marching for a while.

On completion of this the band left the parade square and the members in wheelchairs were invited to say a few words. We were then taken to the RAFA Hotel for lunch which really ended a very happy day.

Clifford Hobbs

Branch Community Support News from Dennis Cruze

The Branch Community Support continues to work well in the village and I continue to be grateful for the help of our Chairman Tom Couch in helping to carrying out this work in our community. Below is a table that gives our activities from 1st October 2018 to 30th June this year. For a small Branch the way we approach Branch Community Support is excellent and in comparison to some larger Branches in Somerset, who have not got involved in this scheme, we are fantastic. So, thank you for your support. Tom and I could really do with some help with visiting and phone calls so should anyone like to assist us, then we would be very grateful. You can contact me on 823340 or denniscruze@btinternet.com.

Branch Community Support Statistic for Banwell Branch						
For Year 1st October 2018 to 30th June 2019						
Total No of Visits	How Many Clients Visited	Total Expenditure	How Many Telephone Buddies Called	Bereavement Support Assistance Given	Local Touchpoints	Awareness Events Held
17	7	£145.60	38	2	0	5

Branch Crisis Grants

During the 2018 the RBL National Conference, a motion was passed allowing Branches to support eligible individuals in situations where immediate support is required up to a value of £200.

I am pleased to announce the launch of the **Branch Crisis Grant** process which allows Branches, like ours, who are signed up to the Branch Community Support programme to issue crisis grants up to this value in urgent situations.

This process has been developed between Membership and Operations to empower our Branch Community Support volunteers to act as a first point of support for applicants in crisis situations, while facilitating a referral to our Area Offices.

Who can issue Branch Crisis Grants

This programme is restricted to Branches who are signed up to the Branch Community Support programme due to the Legion's obligation to follow best practice with regards to Data Protection, Safeguarding and Governance.

What can grants be issued for

Branch Crisis Grants are one-off grants that can be issued quickly to help address the most urgent needs. Branch Crisis Grants can be awarded for:

- Food
- Clothing
- Utility top-ups (electricity and gas)
- Accommodation

This is a procedure that Branches have been asking for, for some time. If you feel that you or you know someone that can be helped by this programme the please contact me on 823340 or denniscruze@btinternet.com.



Banwell Poppy Appeal

Following the retirement of Margaret & Mike Harris new District Organisers have volunteered to try to carry on the good work. We are Martin and Joyce Hemmings. This year's Poppy Appeal runs from Saturday 26 October to Saturday 9 November inclusive and as before our efforts will be concentrated at Morrisons Store at Locking Castle.

As we are new to this role we intend to follow the way that Margaret & Mike have successfully run the Appeal each year and we hope that we can come close to the excellent donation totals they achieved.

We have inherited a list of Volunteers who have helped in the past at Morrisons but we would welcome any others willing to help; typically volunteers are asked to man the table in 2 hour periods.

We plan to contact all the people who have helped in the past and arrange a schedule to suit each person we plan to start this during the first week of October 2019.

If you or anybody you know would like to help this year please contact us.

Tel :- 01934 824780 E :- mjhemmings@live.co.uk

Rewards for Forces

This is a scheme that 'aims to offer the best discounts to members of the Armed Forces, Emergency Services and Police communities as recognition of the hard work and dedication they contribute to the UK'. It covers computers, days out, education, finance, holidays, insurance, motoring, short breaks and travel to name just some. Some may not be relevant to you but others may be. You can find details at www.rewardsforforces.co.uk or telephone 01604 647770. Their mailing address is 'Rewards for Forces', 2nd Floor, 4 St Giles Street, Northampton, NN1 1JA . They also produce a directory.

Membership Renewals

Membership renewal for all the members who joined before 1 April 2015 the renewal of membership takes place on 1 October every year.

The anniversary renewal is for anyone who joined from 1 April 2015. It falls exactly on the date of joining every year.

Cost to the RBL using Direct Debit is 1% of the membership fee. However 'Cash at the branch' is 38% of the membership fee whilst credit/debit card is 4% online and 22% by phone.

Interesting statistics for all of us who renew each year! And the membership card arrives quicker via direct debit.

For those who have an email address but have not updated it with the RBL then please email membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk

Armed Forces Covenant mobile

The purpose of the Vehicle is to raise awareness of the Covenant, Armed Forces and Veterans issues. It also can be used as a platform for surgeries & interviews etc. It has IT services etc on board and also shows the very newly commissioned film "Changing Steps" which highlights some of the problems faced transitioning to Civilian Life.

If you would like more information about the vehicle and concept, please contact David Wood, Project Officer, South West Covenant Consortium, E Mail David.Wood@wiltshire.gov.uk Telephone 01225 713093, Mobile: 07423594574



It was in Weston in July as a trial run and there are plans to hold more sessions throughout the country.

AGM

This is to remind all members that our AGM will be held at 1930 on 17 October in the Village Hall. Sam Underwood from the Army Cadets will be our speaker after the AGM business is completed. It is hoped that as many members as possible attend. Refreshments will be served.

FORMAL DINNER

I would also like to remind you of the Formal dinner at the Mendip Springs Golf Club on 19 October 1900 for 1930. The plan is to have a Trafalgar theme to it as it is so close to Trafalgar day. You should all have received information about both the above. Contact Tom or Gill as soon as possible if you would like to come.

Events/Dates for the Diary

17 October	AGM	1930	Village Hall
19 October	Formal Dinner	1900 for 1930	Mendip Springs Golf Club
26 October	Launch of the Poppy Appeal		Bristol
26 October	RAF Concert		Weston Winter Gardens
2 November	Tree planting to commemorate those from Banwell who fell in WW1	1400	Recreation Grounds, Banwell
10 November	Remembrance Day		
21 November	Branch Meeting	1930	Village Hall
7 December	Quiz/Party, mulled Wine and refreshments	1800 to 2200	Village Hall

2020 Dates of Branch meetings all at 1930. All the third Thursday of the month unless otherwise stated. Other events included

16 January
20 February
19 March
5 April Mendip Springs Lunch
8 May VE Day Look out for events in Banwell that weekend
21 May
18 June
17 September
15 October AGM
Possible Autumn Trip
19 November
December TBC

Details of the above can be obtained from Tom Couch, 823842, or Gill Fawcitt, Gill_Fawcitt04@yahoo.com

Next Newsletter

The next Newsletter will be in January 2020 with a deadline for articles being 9 December 2019. Please feel free to send me articles or suggest content. It would be lovely to receive stories from members.